

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00

MBFR-04 SAJ-01 NSC-10 SS-15 OMB-01 ACDA-19 AEC-11

IO-15 DRC-01 /156 W

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R 092005Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7919

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: GW, NATO, MILI, PFOR

SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER LEBER ON FRG DEFENSE POLICY

1. ONE OF MINISTER LEBER'S AIDES CALLED US TO DRAW OUR ATTENTION TO THE MINISTER'S INTERVIEW ABOUT DEFENSE QUESTIONS CARRIED IN THE RECENT EDITION OF VORWAERTS, THE SPD WEEKLY. HE SAID IT IS AN AUTHORITATIVE STATEMENT OF LEBER'S VIEWS, AND PART OF HIS ATTEMPT TO KEEP SPD MEMBERS BEHIND THE GERMAN DEFENSE EFFORT. AS AN ITEM OF PARTICULAR INTEREST, HE POINTED TO LEBER'S CRITICAL STATEMENTS ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF A EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE (PARA 7 BELOW). HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW.

2. GERMANY AND THE ALLIANCE: THE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE IS THE BASIS FOR FRG POLITICAL INFLUENCE IN EUROPE AND THE GERMAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE ALLIANCE MUST BE LARGE ENOUGH TO PRESERVE THE FRG'S POSITION IN IT. WITHOUT ITS NATO MEMBERSHIP, THE FRG WOULD LARGELY BE ISOLATED AND WOULD BE UNABLE TO BRING ANY INFLUENCE

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TO BEAR ON A WHOLE RANGE OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, ESPECIALLY

THOSE BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS. AS A NATO PARTNER, THE FRG CONTRIBUTES TO MAINTENANCE OF THE BALANCE OF FORCE, WHICH IS INDISPENSABLE TO PEACE. IF THE FRG WERE NOT A MEMBER OF THE WESTERN ALLIANCE, A VACUUM WOULD BE CREATED WHICH WOULD BE "INCALCULABLE" FOR NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. NATO MEMBERSHIP ENABLES THE FRG TO PARTICIPATE IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS AND WILL REMAIN THE INDISPENSABLE BASIS OF WEST GERMAN POLICY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

3. BUNDESWEHR AND THE US DETERRENCE: THE TASK OF THE WEST GERMAN ARMED FORCES IS TO PREVENT WAR. THE BUNDESWEHR THREATENS NO ONE. IT IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE DETERRENCE SYSTEM AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE ALLIANCE AS A WHOLE. AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF DETERRENCE IS AMERICA'S ULTIMATE READINESS TO RISK THE SUBSTANCE OF THE AMERICAN NATION TO LIVE UP TO ITS COMMITMENT OF NUCLEAR PROTECTION OF ITS ALLIES. THE U.S. CAN BE EXPECTED TO ACCEPT THAT GREAT RISK ONLY IF ALL ALLIANCE PARTNERS ARE DETERMINED TO KEEP IT AS LOW AS POSSIBLE. IN OTHER WORDS, AN ADEQUATE EUROPEAN CONTRIBUTION TO NATO DEFENSE IS VITAL TO MAINTAINING SOLID US-EUROPEAN TIES.

4. EUROGROUP: THE EFFORTS OF THE EUROPEAN ALLIANCE MEMBERS TO MAINTAIN A HIGH QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF DEFENSE FORCES, PARTICULARLY FOR CONVENTIONAL EMPLOYMENT, IS A PREREQUISITE FOR CLOSE TIES BETWEEN THE US AND EUROPE. THIS REQUIRES CONCENTRATION OF WEST EUROPEAN DEFENSE EFFORTS, AND THE EUROGROUP IS A REALISTIC POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR STRENGTHENING OF THE EUROPEAN SIDE OF THE ALLIANCE. ALL EUROPEAN NATO MEMBERS ARE WELCOME IN EUROGROUP. IT IS NEITHER A SUBSTITUTE FOR THE ALLIANCE NOR IS IT DIRECTED TOWARD ANY NATO COUNTRIES WHICH ARE NOT MEMBERS. RATHER IT IS AN ATTEMPT TO MAKE PRACTICAL PROGRESS IN IMPROVING AND BROADENING EUROPEAN DEFENSE EFFORTS.

5. EUROPEAN DEFENSE UNION: LEBER THOUGHT THAT EFFORTS TO FORM A EUROPEAN DEFENSE UNION MUST AWAIT A DEFINITIVE POLITICAL UNION. HOWEVER, IT IS NOT IMPORTANT WHEN EXACTLY A EUROPEAN

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DEFENSE UNION WOULD COME INTO BEING. RATHER THE EUROPEANS SHOULD NOT MAKE AN ILL-CONSIDERED ATTEMPT TO BY-PASS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMATICALLY A COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENSE POLICY, AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT A EUROPEAN DEFENSE UNION, WORTHY OF ITS NAME, CANNOT BE FORMED WITHOUT FRANCE.

6. EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE: INTEGRATION EFFORTS MUST, MOREOVER, BE PROTECTED FROM FALSE STARTS. THE EUROPEANS WOULD MAKE A SERIOUS ERROR IF THEY BURDENED THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF POLITICAL INTEGRATION WITH THE PROBLEM OF A EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE. EUROPE STANDS UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE US NUCLEAR GUARANTEE. ESTABLISHMENT OF A EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE WOULD IN THE EYES OF AMERICANS, MAKE US NUCLEAR PROTECTION OF EUROPE APPEAR INCOMPREHENSIBLE, IF NOT SUPERFLUOUS. IN ADDITION, SUCH AN EFFORT WOULD LEAD EUROPEAN INTEGRATION INTO A DEAD END. ONE SHOULD NOT TRY TO SOLVE THE MOST SENSITIVE POLITICAL PROBLEM - THE CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS - WITHOUT THE NECESSARY POLITICAL STRENGTH. A EUROPEAN NUCLEAR FORCE WOULD ONLY BE CONCEIVABLE
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IF A CENTRAL POLITICAL AUTHORITY CONTROLLED IT.

7. MULTILATERAL COOPERATION AMONG THE WEST EUROPEAN ALLIES MUST BE GIVEN PRIORITY OVER BILATERAL COOPERATION. PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND EUROPE IS INDISPENSABLE FOR BOTH. "WE WOULD RENDER OUR FREE, SOCIAL DEMOCRACY A POOR SERVICE IF OUR ACTIONS GAVE RISE TO THE CONCLUSION AMONG EASTERN GOVERNMENT LEADERS THAT WE ARE RELAXING IN OUR DEFENSE EFFORTS, AND WE WOULD JEOPARDIZE PEACE IF OUR ACTIONS GAVE RISE TO THE CONCLUSION AMONG EAST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST LEADERS THAT THEY COULD CATCH US NAPPING."
HILLENBRAND

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